

Message Text

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ACTION IO-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ARA-06 EA-07 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 EB-07

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /105 W

----- 107120

P R 050830Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4621

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS UNN

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USMISSION UN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUXEMBOURG 0706

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: PFOR, LU, UNGA, OVIP (THORN, GASTON)

SUBJ: THORN AT THE UNGA

REF: LUXEMBOURG A-25, MAY 30, 1975 (NOTAL)

1. THERE IS LITTLE TO ADD TO REF AIRGRAM'S COMPREHENSIVE
AND CURRENT BIOGRAPHIC SKETCH OF PRIME MINISTER THORN EXCEPT
THE FOLLOWING THOUGHTS ON HIS ROLE AS PRESIDENT OF THE
30TH UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

2. IN SEEKING THE PRESIDENCY OF THE UNGA, THORN IS MOTI-
VATED BY A MIXTURE OF PERSONAL AND POLITICAL AMBITION. AT
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AGE 47, HE HAS REACHED THE SUMMIT OF LUXEMBOURG POLITICS

AND HAS ESTABLISHED HIMSELF AS A RESPECTED EUROPEAN STATES-MAN. HE CLEARLY HOPES TO USE THE UNGA PRESIDENCY AS A SPRINGBOARD TO A LARGER, IF AS YET UNDEFINED, ROLE ON THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE. HE WILL WELCOME AND EVEN SEEK OUT EXTENSIVE MEDIA COVERAGE DURING HIS PRESIDENCY.

3. THORN OBVIOUSLY HOPES UN PUBLICITY WILL HAVE FAVORABLE REPERCUSSIONS DOMESTICALLY IN BOOSTING HIS ALREADY ENORMOUS POPULARITY IN LUXEMBOURG AND IN INCREASING POPULAR BACKING FOR HIS SMALL LIBERAL PARTY (PARTI DEMOCRATIQUE). HE WILL ABSENT HIMSELF FROM NEW YORK DURING A WEEK OR TEN DAYS IN OCTOBER TO CAMPAIGN FOR THE OCTOBER 12 LUXEMBOURG MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS WHICH WILL IN PART TEST PUBLIC APPROVAL OF THORN'S YEAR-OLD GOVERNMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES. HE HAS DECIDED TO LEAVE HIS ABLEST FOREIGN POLICY ADVISOR, PIERRE WURTH, IN LUXEMBOURG TO HANDLE GOL FOREIGN RELATIONS DURING HIS ABSENCE, UNDER THE NOMINAL DIRECTION OF ECONOMIC MINISTER MARCEL MART.

4. EQUALLY IMPORTANT TO THORN, HOWEVER, IS THE IMPACT HIS UN ROLE WILL HAVE ON HIS PRESTIGE WITHIN THE EEC. DURING HIS PRESIDENCY HE WILL REGARD HIMSELF ABOVE ALL AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE COMMUNITY. HE RARELY MISSES AN OCCASION TO EXPLAIN THAT HIS EC PARTNERS, PARTICULARLY FRANCE, "PUSHED" HIM INTO POSING HIS CANDIDACY FOR THE UNGA PRESIDENCY. SOURCES CLOSE TO THE PRIME MINISTER INDICATE THAT HE WILL BE DEEPLY INFLUENCED AND GUIDED ON POLICY ISSUES BY EEC POSITIONS. WHILE THORN HAS GREAT RESPECT AND ADMIRATION FOR THE US AND WILL CERTAINLY BE FRIENDLY AND FORTHCOMING WITH US OFFICIALS, THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY OF INFLUENCING HIM WILL PROBABLY BE INDIRECTLY, THROUGH PRESSURE FROM THE EEC MEMBER STATES, PARTICULARLY FRANCE AND GERMANY.

5. AS PRESIDENT, THORN WILL BE PREPARED TO TAKE FORCEFUL, EVEN UNPOPULAR STANDS, ON ISSUES HE FEELS STRONGLY ABOUT: FOR EXAMPLE, ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO REMAIN IN THE UN. HE CAN BE COUNTED ON TO USE ALL THE POWERS AVAILABLE TO HIM AS UNGA PRESIDENT TO OPPOSE ANY MOVE TO EXPEL ISRAEL. ON MOST OTHER ISSUES, HOWEVER, HIS INCLINATION AND PREFERENCE WILL BE TO AVOID CONFRONTATION. FOR EXAMPLE, HE PERSONALLY

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DISAPPROVES OF SOUTH AFRICAN RACIAL POLICIES AND BELIEVES THAT A LARGE MAJORITY IN THE UN FAVORS THE BOUTEFLIKA RULING AS OPPOSED TO THE HAMBRO RULING ON SOUTH AFRICAN CREDENTIALS. HE BELIEVES POWERS OF CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE, PRESIDENT, AND GA HAVE BECOME HOPELESSLY ENTANGLED IN SOUTH AFRICAN ISSUE AND, AS PRESIDENT, WILL ATTEMPT TO FORCE SOME CLARIFICATION. HOWEVER, HE WILL LIKELY UPHOLD THE BOUTEFLIKA RULING IF IT COMES UP IN ISOLATION FROM OTHER ISSUES, E.G., ISRAEL OR

ANOTHER COUNTRY'S CREDENTIALS. MFA SOURCES INSIST THORN WILL ENERGETICALLY OPPOSE ANY EFFORT TO ENSHRINE THE BOUTEFLIKA RULING AS AN IRON PRECEDENT OR TO EXTEND IT TO ISRAEL. IN THIS RESPECT, ONE STRATEGY HE IS CONSIDERING IS TO DIFFERENTIATE SOUTH AFRICA FROM OTHER COUNTRIES ON THE BASIS OF THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE'S MOTIVES WHICH HE WILL ATTEMPT TO MAKE A MATTER OF RECORD. HE WOULD THEN BE IN A POSITION TO AFFIRM THE BOUTEFLIKA RULING ON SOUTH AFRICA BUT REJECT IT IN OTHER CASES, ARGUING THE COMMITTEE'S MOTIVES OR REASONS ARE NOT THE SAME AND DO NOT CONFORM TO THE UN CHARTER. THIS APPROACH IS EXTREMELY TENTATIVE AT THIS POINT, AND THORN'S ADVISORS SAY HE STILL HAS AN OPEN MIND ON THE WHOLE SOUTH AFRICAN CREDENTIALS QUESTION AND COULD BE PERSUADED ONE WAY OR ANOTHER IF AN EC CONSENSUS EMERGES.

6. ON OTHER ISSUES WHICH PIT THE INDUSTRIAL WORLD AGAINST THE THIRD WORLD, THORN HOPES TO DRAW ON HIS IMPRESSIVE PARLIAMENTARY SKILLS, WHICH HAVE SERVED HIM WELL WITHIN THE EEC, TO FOSTER COMPROMISE AND ACCOMMODATION. HE HOPES TO ESTABLISH HIS CREDENTIALS AS A FRIEND OF THE THIRD WORLD BUT HE PLANS TO EMPHASIZE IN DEALING WITH THEM THAT A VIABLE UN AND RESPECT FOR THE UN CHARTER ARE MUCH MORE IMPORTANT TO THEIR LONG-RANGE INTERESTS THAN ANY NUMBER OF SHORT-RUN POLITICAL SATISFACTIONS.

7. FINALLY, IF THORN IS TRUE TO FORM, HE WILL BE A SERIOUS, HARD-WORKING, SKILLFUL PRESIDENT. HE HAS CHAIRED INNUMERABLE EEC AND EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT MEETINGS, ASSEMBLIES AND DEBATES AND IS A MASTER OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE AND PROTOCOL. HIS COMPLETE FLUENCY IN FRENCH AND GERMAN, HIS EXCELLENT COMMAND OF ENGLISH, HIS ORATORICAL SKILLS, SENSE OF HUMOR AND PERSONAL CHARM SHOULD MAKE HIM A POPULAR AND INFLUENTIAL PRESIDENT. HE WILL MAKE A SERIOUS EFFORT TO

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RESTORE THE NEUTRALITY OF THE PRESIDENCY WHICH HE BELIEVES WAS COMPROMISED BY BOUTEFLIKA.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION, ELECTION CANDIDATES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 SEP 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: KelleyW0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975LUXEMB00706
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X2
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750307-0398
From: LUXEMBOURG
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750980/aaaacsxb.tel
Line Count: 157
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 LUXEMBOURG A-25
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: KelleyW0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 APR 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <14 OCT 2003 by KelleyW0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: THORN AT THE UNGA
TAGS: PFOR, OVIP, LU, UNGA, (THORN, GASTON)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006